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Man Fishes Turtle Out of Moscow River

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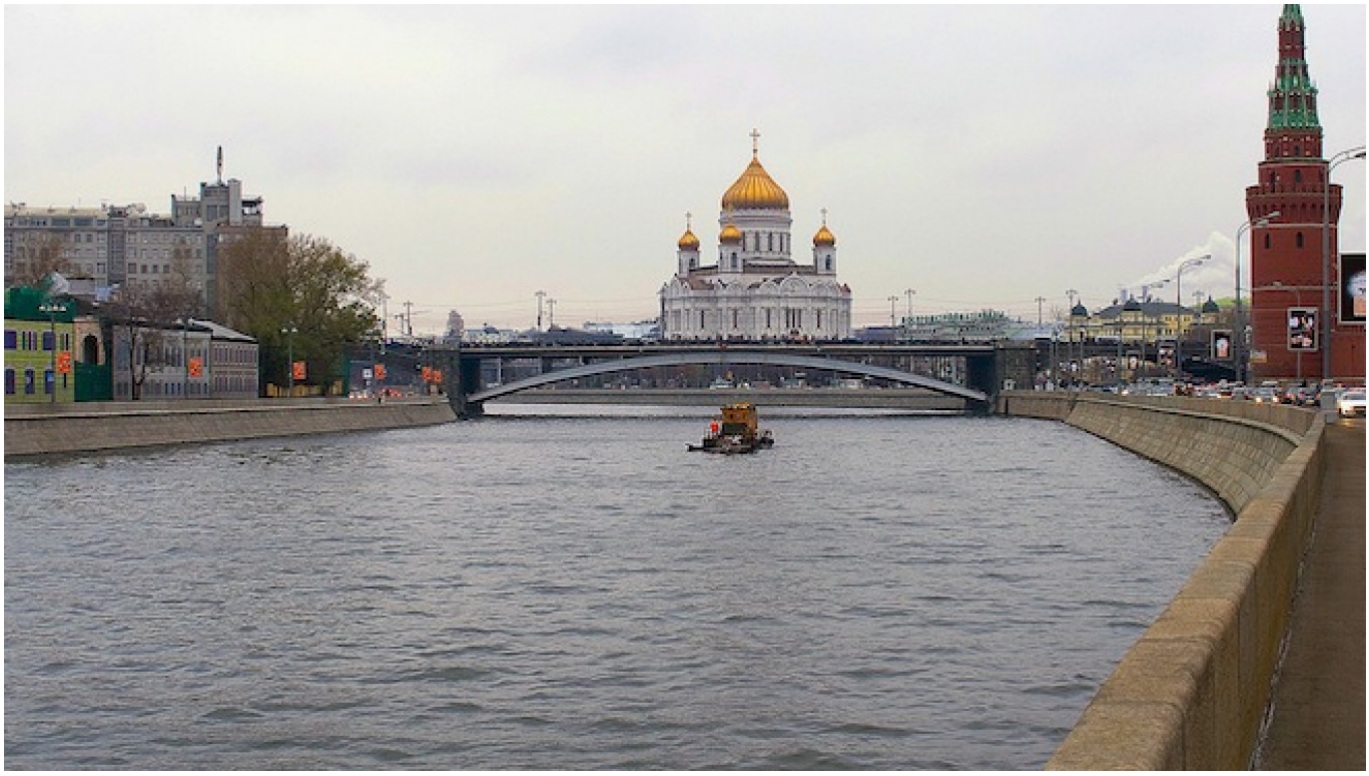

A Moscow resident has found a turtle in the Moscow River, in a case that zoologists link to a boom in the illegal turtle trade in the capital, news website Moskva24 reported on Friday.

On Thursday, Moscow resident Mikhail Nezabudkin posted a video on his VKontakte page that shows a red-eared slider turtle sliding back into the river.

“Caught a turtle in the Moscow River,” Nezabudkin wrote in the post.

This is not the first time Moscow residents have encountered turtles in local waters, although they are not native to the region.

Zoologists have connected the emergence of the creatures to black market dealers and irresponsible pet owners.

Aquariums full of small “nanoturtles” can frequently be seen next to metro and railways stations, in underpasses and markets.

The salespeople tell buyers that the turtles will never grow very big (as suggested by the

name), and when the animals do grow, many owners discard them in ponds or rivers.

“These turtles will be able to survive till the first cold days only,” ecologist Natalia Dronova told Moskva24. “Their homeland is South and Central America; they won't live through the Russian winter.”
Zoologist Maria Rodina, who has adopted three red-eared slider turtles, suggests that those who want a turtle should do the same.

“Don't buy a turtle on a street or in a pet store. It’s better to adopt one the owners have decided to get rid of,” Rodina said.

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